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Hospital Corpsman Skills Basic Course a Program Reborn

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By Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Matthew Blake



Winston Churchill said, “To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often.”

If you’ve been around Navy Medicine for any time, you’ve likely found that to be a common mantra –

constantly striving to improve. Starting Oct. 1, Hospital Corpsman (HM) at every Budget Submitting Office (BSO) 18 Patient Care Facility or reserve command will be introduced to such an improvement effort – the updated Hospital Corpsman Skills Basic (HMSB) program.

I know you might be thinking, “That course has been around for a long time.” You are correct; however, this program has recently changed in a major way.

The Bureau of Medicine and Surgery Instruction 1510.23D was released May 7, and within this instruction there were several changes to HM training requirements. Major changes to the policy were all HMs in pay grades E1- E6 stationed at a BSO-18 Patient Care Facility will complete HMSB evaluation every two years, or within 180 days of HSAP or IA deployment. The HM chief petty officer community will no longer be subject to the requirement. There are several other changes that can be found in the instruction, but I’ll expound on a few key points.



Program Director for Hospital Corpsman Skills Basic (HMSB) course, HMCS Charissa Charissa Czarniawsk (left) works with the Program Administrator, HM2 Matthew Blake to update and standardize the HMSB course.

[Navy Medicine Professional Development Center \(NMPDC\)](#) has been named the “Center of Excellence” for the HMSB program. This mission has not been taken lightly. A full-court press spanning all levels of leadership has been involved in the revision of the HMSB program. We took the old HMSB Performance Check Lists (PCLs), evaluation check lists currently used in HM “A” school, and feedback from “fleet lessons learned,” and we combined them into five basic and easy-to-understand PCLs.

First, I went to Joint Base San Antonio – Fort Sam Houston (JBSA-FSH), home of HM “A” School. With the assistance of the Navy Academics Chair, we collaborated on the most vital mission-essential skills and methods of evaluation used in Corps School. That undertaking was to ensure that the level of information being taught in HM “A” school was properly reflected in the HMSB program and that the

methods mirrored the evaluation. Our goal is to aid junior Corpsman in taking what they learned in “A” school, what they demonstrated and applied at a Patient Care Facility, and help them better use those skills in the fleet.

Second, all BSO-18 Patient Care Facility or reserve commands have the same standardized format. The primary complaint of the prior HMSB program was that every command had a different approach and interpretation. Now one version of the PCLs will be used Navy Medicine wide. Additionally, all BSO-18 Patient Care Facility or Reserve commands will coordinate with the NMETC SEAT Liaison Office, which is located on JBAS-FSH. This mechanism will ensure every command has the same approach to HMSB.



HMCS Charissa Czarniawsk (left) Program Director for Hospital Corpsman Skills Basic (HMSB) Course and the program’s administrator, HM2 Matthew Blake discuss the standardized curriculum and how it supports the new education policy.

Third, HMSB demonstration videos are in the works. The BUMED Video Information Directorate is working in conjunction with NMPDC on these videos as a form of remediation. Each video will be available to watch on the NMPDC website giving every Navy Corpsman the opportunity to remediate on his or her own terms instead of sitting through a day of PowerPoint presentations. HMSB failure after proper remediation will result in consideration of HM rating removal, so we want to provide HMs at every level the resources needed to pass.

In conclusion, the Hospital Corpsman Basic Skills program has undergone a major overhaul. With an understanding of the evolving operational landscape, we at NMPDC believe our finished product will not only underline the Surgeon General’s strategic priorities of readiness, value and jointness, but also enhance the delivery of world-class care. Our product and vision has been shaped by Navy Medicine Education and Training at all levels, and we are optimistic that this revised training requirement will

benefit the entire Navy-Marine Corps team!

Questions, concerns, or comments? Please contact Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Matthew Blake, HMSB Program Administrator, at matthew.a.blake2.mil@mail.mil or HMSB Program Director Senior Chief Hospital Corpsman Charissa Czarniawski, at charissa.m.czarniawski.mil@mail.mil.

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